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Preparing for an election page 5 **Natural wonders** page 8 **High school drama** page 15

Play ball
The Senior Girls Soccer team at Haliburton Highlands Secondary School hosted IE Weldon from Lindsay last week on the home field. For more photos, see inside this edition. /TIM YANO staff photographer

Martial arts; a knock out in Haliburton

THOMAS SMITH
Journalist

Sometimes, watching cartoons pays off. For Kelly Outram, It was *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* as a kid when he first learned about the martial art of karate.

An instance of bullying pushed Outram to learn the technique, and bring him the confidence and physicality to defend himself.

While Donatello, Raphael, Michelangelo and Raphael introduced Outram to the world of martial arts, it was Sensei Cliff who taught Outram at the age of seven. At 13, having just earned his brown belt, his instructor moved away from the county.

Later in life, Outram would regularly move away from Haliburton County during the winter for work. When he was 19,

see MARTIAL page 13

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Successful book launch for Whitteker's *Nature Nuggets*

IVY KATZ

Journalist

Naturally, Rick Whitteker's book launch for *Nature Nuggets: Hiking, Paddling & the Ecology of the Haliburton Highlands* drew a much larger crowd than anticipated. "We were expecting about fifty people but it seems like we have at least eighty people who showed up," said Lisa Tolentino, Whitteker's partner, and his sister, Michele Whitteker, both of whom were minding the book sales. The line up was indeed non-stop. On top of 100 pre-ordered books being sold, this was an incredible turnout.

The event attracted many locals last Friday morning inside Castle Antiques, where Whitteker gave a short talk and spent the rest of the time signing books non-stop. Some of the proceeds of book sales go to the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust and the Children's Water Festival. Three kids from Abbey Gardens' EcoExplorer program came for a book. Wildlife biologist Irene Heaven, the head the EcoExplorer program, aims to help kids get hooked on nature, and noted that Whitteker works part-time supporting the Abbey Gardens programming.

Just one of the many ways Whitteker is involved in local ecology and environmental awareness.

With a background in education, the recently published author has been in the Haliburton Highlands since 1997, and worked at Haliburton Forest and Fleming College over those years. After 15 years at Fleming, where he ran an outdoor-based program, he is now involved with the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust, where he is a coordinator for the Partners in Conservation program, working on private land owner and stewardship incentives.

Whitteker insists that he does not identify as a "nature expert," and instead he is someone who knows "a little bit about a lot of things," and leaves it up to others to decide which areas inspire interest or joy, which people can create and explore in further depth. His personal method is to hone in on anything that strikes him as beautiful in nature. He then researches that element., and shares his findings in his regular columns. Many of these observations can be found in his biweekly article series *Naturally Yours* in *County Life*.

"I try to connect with people on an emotional level," said Whitteker, "hoping they will follow up on things that spark their curiosity and their own outdoor exploration journey." His work is a "labour of love," and he believes that is what makes his writing approachable. Whitteker gives people the "nature nuggets" with which they can move forward into deeper exploration.

Find Whitteker's book at Castle Antiques or Master's Books. You can find out more about the book and Whitteker's upcoming events at rickwhitteker.info.

Eco Explorer and enthusiast Lennon Tiffin holds Rick Whitteker's just-launched book at Friday's packed event. /IVY KATZ staff

Friday, May 22nd at 2pm
Join the Haliburton County Master Gardeners for the
Grand Opening
of the Minden Boardwalk Interpretive Tour
• Official Ribbon Cutting
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Where: Boardwalk Trailhead (behind the Minden Library), 176 Bobcaygeon Road, Minden
Stepping into Nature
Haliburton County Master Gardeners
www.HaliburtonMasterGardener.ca

Helping Mother Nature

Environment Haliburton hosted a litter clean up this past Saturday in Head Lake Park, with conversations around recycling, advocacy, and how community memebrs can help out. President of Environment Haliburton, Susan Hay, shared that with the current recycling program in place, only 43 per cent of beverage containers are properly collected, with a possibility of going up to 90 per cent if a deposit system were to be implemented. For more information on the programs and iniatives from Environment Haliburton, visit www.environmenthaliburton.org. /TM YANO staff photographer

Rita Baird; her story remembered

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

Haliburton County local Rita Baird lived quite a life.

Born in England in 1936, she was just a child when Nazi Germany bombed her hometown of Hull.

Rita's family was forced to flee to an air raid shelter.

"The house was gone when she got back," said her daughter Julie Baird Charboneau. For her entire life, Rita remembered how the shelter shook, and how scared she was.

Rita's family joined the 47 per cent of all residents of the community who became homeless after the Hull Blitz. By the end of World War II, Hull was the most severely damaged city in all of the United Kingdom.

Starting high school was not easy either, with her school getting destroyed before she could even begin. A temporary school was built on Bilton Grange.

After graduating in the spring of 1952, Baird worked in the office for British Industrial Solvents, a company owned by The Distillers Group, a creator of Scotch whisky.

Baird was the secretary for their export manager.

It was by fate that she struck up a conversation with a woman she worked with while travelling home on the bus. After talking, the woman offered passage aboard a ship to Canada as her companion was unable to go.

Rita took her up on the offer.

She left Liverpool on Canadian Pacific's Empress of Canada in 1959, landing in Montreal. She celebrated her 23rd birthday aboard the ship on April 13.

Prior to immigrating to Canada, Baird needed to secure work. By phone, she landed an interview with the Robert Simpson Company.

Harris Henry Fudger, president of the company, was a notable businessman and philanthropist in charge of Simpson's department stores. In 1916, Fudger acquired the former home of Senator George Cox. He converted the home into a boarding house for young women who sought a comforting, nurturing place to establish their lives within Toronto.

The Sherbourne House Club offered 150 rooms for

This Tree of Life wall tapestry depicts integral events of Rita Baird's life, from joining the Women's Institute to her immigration to Canada. /submitted

independent businesswomen, mainly those who worked for Simpson's.

Rita secured the job with the company, and permanently moved to Toronto into the Sherbourne House Club, later named the Fudger House in 1951.

It was through a friend that she went to Miners Bay for holiday. Here she met Don.

The moment he met Rita, he knew that she was the one, and the next stage of Rita's life began.

Later in life, the couple owned a cottage in West Guil-

Rita Baird's original ticket to Canada.

ford. With their kids, they spent every weekend and summer in the community before moving permanently in 1984.

Rita flourished in Haliburton County, joining the local Women's Institute and later, the Circle of Friends.

These organizations offered Baird the opportunity to make lifelong friendships, and to make a difference in her community.

"What people put into Minden is pride," said Baird Charboneau.

Beyond the lifelong friendships, it was the ruggedness of the landscape, the lifestyle, and the slower pace of life in Haliburton County that Baird enjoyed most.

All throughout her life, she never regretted moving to Canada.

With a terminal heart condition, Baird chose to spend her last few years of her life surrounded by family. Never losing her adventurous spirit and love for life, she travelled to places like Las Vegas, Prince Edward Island, and road trips around Ontario, visiting old friends.

As lifetime supporters of the Legion, Rita Baird's celebration of life took place on April 18 at the Minden Legion. Included in the event was a detailed history of her life, including the impact that war had on shaping it.

Hal High Monthly

Hal High Monthly is written by the Haliburton Highlands Secondary School leadership class featuring monthy school news.

By Chase Winder, Ty Rupnow, Grace Alder, Macie Bjelis, Owen Megrah-Poppe and Autumn Robins Micall

The 2025-2026 school year is shaping up to be one of high performance, determination, and fierce student achievement and participation, both in and out of school, with this trend undoubtedly manifesting itself headstrong in April at Hal High. With the school year heading into the homestretch, students have been working hard and fast to bring change to the school, embodying the spirit of spring, bringing a willingness to improve Hal High, and fostering a welcoming, hardworking environment.

As the calendar recently turned to spring, the leadership students at HHSS have embraced the new season. Spring week began in March, with leadership students planning events and spirit days including pastel and floral day to get ready for Easter weekend and spring weather, as well as an Easter bake sale. We also celebrated St. Patrick›s day by wearing green and playing cornhole during lunch break with the chance to win chocolate gold coins.

Each day leading up to Easter break, paper eggs were hidden around the school with a different letter on each of them. Once all the eggs were found there was an Easter related word to be unscrambled using the letters. When the word was solved correctly the students name was placed into a draw to win a prize. There was a new word each day allowing students to participate for the whole week. April 22 was green and blue day to celebrate Earth Day. With the intention of supporting the Earth Day initiatives, all lights in the school were turned off for the afternoon to raise awareness about how much energy is actually used each day. Students were also invited to pick up garbage around the school to keep the environment clean, and to reduce littering around the school.

Last month Hal High had its first ever "Necklace Game". The whole school was given beaded necklaces to wear and then challenged each other to games of rock, paper scissors. If you lost you gave your necklace to the winner. Students could buy back into the game if they were eliminated. The game lasted from March 31 to April 2. Whoever still had a necklace left at lunch on April 2 was invited to a final show down in the cafe. These final players challenged each other, and in the end we had a winner: Kendall Park! She won a $25 gift card to A&W.

On Wednesday, April 8, Haliburton Highlands Secondary School hosted its third annual Cornhole Classic. Teams of two competed in separate junior and senior divisions, with 24 teams in each division. The Juniors kicked off the day, followed by the Seniors in the afternoon. Many classes began arriving at the gymnasium to support the participants and cheer them on. In the Junior bracket, Vanek and Brody claimed the championship, while Mr. Ernst and Mr. Gaffney grabbed the senior title. The event was once again a success, promoting school spirit, teamwork, and friendly competition.

As of April 10, our annual Spring Fling semi formal dance occurred at HHSS. Our Spring Semi is our main fundraiser for prom. Before fundraising for prom, the average price of a prom ticket would be $80. After fundraising it becomes much more affordable. This year to encourage our students to attend Spring Semi we had sunglasses and went around asking people if they were going; and if so to put on the sunglasses to take a picture! The pictures were gathered and made into a video to be posted on our social media pages. The improvement in our school spirit and participation is climbing through the roof thanks to all of our volunteers and students encouraging others.

April was defined by a sense of play and community at Haliburton Highlands Secondary School.

Submitted

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www.ThoseOtherMovies.com

Help a HAVE in Minden

Help a Village Effort (HAVE) is holding its annual walk for water event on Wednesday, May 27, at 7 p.m., starting and ending at Highlands Hills United Church.

The County-based charity raises money to build wells and sanitation blocks in rural villages in India, concentrating on villages that have schools.

Walkers are now collecting pledges.

Donations for this event, or in general, can be made:

By cheque - made out to HAVE and mail to Box 553, Minden, ON, K0M 2K0. Include your name, address, and e-mail address to receive an official donation receipt for income tax purposes and to receive from HAVE future requests for needed funds through Canada Helps at www.canadahelps.org.

Via e-transfer to have@helpavillageeffort.org. Send an email to this same address with your name and address to receive an official donation receipt.

Submitted

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Strong Mayor Powers a hot topic for council conversations

IVY KATZ

Journalist

The Haliburton Legion had a full house on Tuesday, May 5 for a community information session on how to run for municipal office. The event drew a mix of ages and audience members asking many questions, with the Strong Mayors Act in particular as a hot topic.

Municipal representatives and council members were in attendance to answer audience questions, offering a thorough presentation addressing everything from what one can expect when they run for council, what one can expect once elected, and what the daily life of a council member looks like; from time commitments to the toll leading a public life can have on one's family. The speakers explained that compromise is a huge part of the job.

Points brought up which were covered included conflict of interest, accountability, the importance of transparency within the government, strong confidentiality laws that bind public servants, legal and land issues, engaging with the media, social media challenges, eligibility and requirements needed to run, the legal elements of endorsements, the ethics of raising funds to run for office, acclamation, voter turn-out, electronic and telephone voting, and more.

Electronic and telephone voting were also topics of interest among the audience, with statistics indicating that telephone voting helped seniors in particular place their votes in the last election.

The Strong Mayors Act also raised many questions from the audience, with members seeking to understand the reasoning behind the regulations. Strong Mayors Act was explained to be provincially mandated onto municipalities, and beyond the control of local representatives. Within Haliburton County, only Dysart and Minden qualify for Strong Mayor Powers based on population.

The evening covered conduct expectations for council members, such as the respect for collective authority within council. For example, the conduct and respect that is expected of all councillors, regardless of when an issue goes in their favour or not. The emotional toll of being in public office was highlighted, and it was emphasized that running is not just about putting one's name on the ballot; it affects one's family and finances.

Ultimately, running for council is a deeply personal decision, and the role of a council member is not just one role - each role comes with many roles. Although the role of councillor may constitute part-time hours on paper with some averaging 22 to 25 hours a week, the position comes with tough decisions and huge personal sacrifice.

The collaborative environment of council is a microcosm of the development of a community. As members of the community, we can all do our part to be informed.

It was explained that acclamation, when someone is the only candidate for a role and no one formally objects, is far more common in rural communities than one would think. All the more reason to get involved.

Nominations opened May 1, and will close at 2 p.m. on August 21, 2026.

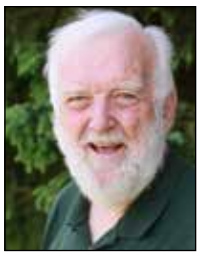
Election day will be Monday, October 26, 2026.

Point of view

Show and tell; power to the teachers

I MUST say, I really admire Ontario Premier Doug Ford and Education Minister Paul Calandra for their bold and decisive decision making. I refer to the appointment of CEOs as heads of the largest school boards in the province.

Nothing illustrates the foresight and creative thinking of the Premier and his minions better than putting corporate big-wigs in charge of our children's education. After all, are these so-called students not mere widgets in a giant scheme to turn out compliant cogs in the economy of Ontario? You know, raw material to be shaped and moulded to meet the targets of a growing tax base. It may take twelve long and tumultuous years to perfect a widget, I mean student, to make a meaningful contribution to the economy, but under the direction of these CEOs the process is bound to be smooth and efficient.



Point of view

Jack Brezina

And who better to provide that guidance than someone who delights in spread sheets, gets excited between the sheets, umm, balance sheets, and who demands a 100 per cent attendance record, brooking no excuses or ears for compassionate stories. It is certainly a CEO who can tame the problems of an education system held hostage by a gaggle of teachers and their cohorts and parents pleading for smaller classes, more resources and someone in charge who understands how education works. A system choked by requests for more supports for special needs students. And woe be to those who think art or music instruction has any place in our elementary classrooms. Bring on the CEOs as they sharpen their budget-cutting knives. Trust in their board room experience to lead the charge to a leaner, and dare it be said, meaner, education system. And, wonderfully they need not curry favour with shareholders, formerly known as parents, because the CEOs have been appointed and have exceptional powers. They are beyond the reach of the ballot. They answer to ... who knows?

It may be wishful thinking, but I would like to propose that, with CEOs appointed to oversee school boards, perhaps we can circumvent the election system elsewhere and appoint teachers, specifically kindergarten teachers, to the positions of Premier and various and sundry cabinet roles. After all, kindergarten teachers are familiar with bringing order to a chaotic environment ... to getting people working together, focused on the task at hand ... quieting disputes ... soothing bruised egos and skinned knees. They know how to accomplish goals on a daily basis, inform their charges in unambiguous language and do it a number of times to ensure the lessons are absorbed. Kindergarten teachers know the restorative value of vigorous outdoor play and scheduled quiet time. They encourage co-operative enterprise, sharing and being polite to your peers and congratulate individual accomplishment and leadership. They know how to make everyone feel special and ensure their fabulous artwork is tucked safely into the backpacks for the trip home.

As far as I can recall, kindergarten teachers have never asked for, nor expected to receive an aircraft of any description for their personal use (even one that can land at most airports in Ontario). Nor have they suggested drilling a tunnel, or closing a science centre or proposing a foreign owned spa occupy public lands. While they do get two months off each summer, they don't, without reason or explanation, arbitrarily take as much time as they like away from work. Kindergarten teachers are not elected, but they do consult regularly with their constituents, working co-operatively with them and their parents to achieve positive outcomes.

CEOs heading up school boards ... kindergarten teachers running the provincial government.

It sounds like a pretty good trade-off to me.

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Only human

Editorial

Emily Stonehouse

SOME MAY have noticed that I do not have as many words in this week's edition of the newspaper.

While I didn't write much, the words still came. Fast and furious, fleeting and flying.

I just didn't write them down. Because at the end of the day, we're only human.

My week and my world were turned upside down this past Monday afternoon. We took our two-year-old son to the doctor for a bad cough, and very quickly, things escalated. A helicopter called, a flight to SickKids, doctors, nurses, paramedics, specialists.

As I write these words, we are home. A whirlwind few days, hopefully in the rearview mirror, but their impacts forever pressed into my heart and soul.

After a week, I looked into a mirror for the first time. My nail polish chipped, my hair tattered.

And I realized I didn't care. My pride, joy, and heartbeat lives outside my body, this shell that floats me place to place.

I was reminded that everyone is navigating their own journey. You see the world, unfurl before your eyes; people walking and wandering, their stories twisting and turning in their heads, but their faces carry a mask. Presenting well, getting ahead.

You go through the maze of space trying to move forward; to beat the competition, to rally the troops. You numb the pain with blinders, and choke down each new day.

But I will never take a day of health for granted again. My week and my world turned upside down, a reminder of what's truly important in life.

As we head into election time, we need to remember that at the end of the day, we're only human. Municipal elections hit differently. Instead of figureheads they're friends, instead of nobodies they're neighbours.

And they're only human.

Let us be reminded that we are all balancing the weight of our own stories. We carry soft underbellies in the form of children and animals and tender topics that make us curl in. We hold the effort of emotions, the commonality of compassion.

I need to thank the physicians who cared for my son with such dedication and diligence. I am eternally grateful for modern medicine, for vaccines, and for healthcare workers who prioritize people.

I also need to commend my team, who stepped up to the plate, sink or swim, when my week and my world were turned upside down. We have newspapers this week because of them, and only them.

And to our community, who have reached out with concern and care, softness and soup. We live in a corner of the world that puts love on the forefront, and I hope we never forget that.

I don't share this story to elicit pity or sadness. Our family was one of the lucky ones. We got to leave the hospital, with a healing little boy propped on our tired hips.

But I aim to send a reminder to the world; that we are all human, all vulnerable, all trying our very best, each and every day.

Those words came to me, all week, fast and furious, fleeting and flying. They swirled in my brain, while watching my heart beat outside of my body.

But I didn't write them down.

Because at the end of the day, we're only human.

A he–said she–said dilemma

Pair, Ponder

Poke, Peel

Fay Martin

A YOUNG relative of mine is on a gender-change journey. I struggle with using the new name and the new pronouns, and while I desperately want to respect this teenager's choice, I also feel the need to put it within a larger context.

How did choosing gender get on the developmental agenda of children, let alone achieve the priority it commands?

First, let's clarify a few things. One: sex and gender are not the same thing. Sex is biological equipment and what we do with it; gender is behaviour that is culturally associated with sex, aka masculine or feminine behaviour as defined by place and time.

Two: sex has always operated within a continuum of hetero- and homosexual preference, and gender has always been immensely malleable and required choices throughout the life cycle.

I want to add a third basic 'truth', although this will draw debate: sex has always been vulnerable to commodification for financial gain. The sale of sex for money, aka prostitution, is the world's oldest profession. Wives have been bought, husbands have been purchased.

And on a lighter note, I recall from Sociology class eons ago looking for sex symbols in the ice cubes of drink commercials, secret sirens that whispered Buy Me into unsuspecting ears. And of course curvaceous women in body-sculpting dresses selling cars, and fawning over a modern washing machine or stove, in the post-war era when women were being lured back into the kitchen and factories needed to shift to producing peace-time products.

So choices about sex – what to do with the equipment we have, with whom, how – are as old as nature. Choices about gender are much more socially prescribed. Being ladylike was defined differently in my day than now; differently in the upper classes of British society than my rural Canadian environment, even in the same era; differently in my community than in a similar community in, say, India or Ghana.

So what is the social prescription of this time and place that has put a choice about what gender to be on every young teenager's agenda?

My young relative has an army of paid professionals to guide them (thank god for a neutral pronoun) in their journey. So do their parents and their siblings. The school system is paying gaboodles for a thorough psychological assessment that will help them figure out how to unleash the intelligence and academic motivation of this pre-occupied youngster.

This puts me in mind of the upswelling of professional expertise that arose when we 'discovered' that sexual abuse happened in all echelons on our society, a multi-discipline specialization that attracted a clientele, purchased by personal or public funds. Not so much a solution to a problem, let alone the prevention of a problem, as an economic opportunity provided by a problem.

So if we let our minds wander to what might prevent what I am perhaps foolishly calling the problem of having to decide what gender one is before puberty declares it for us, where would that take us?

First, I think we would sharpen our perception of the boundary between sex and gender. We would allow people to be who and what they wanted to be regardless of their sexual equipment.

The argumentative might say we've already done that, by allowing women to work in the big world and men to undertake domestica and parenting.

They would also have to admit, however, that inequity continues in both spheres, certainly financially (the earning gap between men and women doing the same work, the systemic discounting of pay for 'women's work', the refusal to put monetary value on the work of personal care), but also socially. Shoot me, but I insist that we still live in a patriarchal world, masquerading in the garb of capitalism. (Where being a man won't get power, having money will.)

Second … oops, I don't have a second suggestion. If we didn't care what sexual equipment people had except when engaging in sexual activity, the business of transitioning from one sex to another in order to be the gender of choice would become irrelevant.

If I was pushed to articulate a second recommendation, it would go to learning to live with ambiguity, with uncertainty. Because in the ambivalence of gender lies its power.

Which may well be why it has come into the crosshairs of our world, a last frontier to dominate. And why we have made choosing gender, rather than living it, the work of children.

My working hypothesis with respect to my young relative is that they are looking to become female because they can't figure out how to be the male they want to be, largely because of a scarcity of good models, and a horde of bad models who 'make it big'. Maybe I'm wrong.

points of view

Spider?! Man!

ON THE weekend, I was minding my own business, walking down our basement hallway in socks (because that's how I roll) when I accidentally kicked something that possessed enough heft to get my attention.

So, I looked down, and there it was looking back, and not too pleased either.

I'm not suggesting that this spider was big. But I will say that I almost stubbed my toe on it.

I won't lie. It startled me. But overall, I handled the encounter well.

Most people I know would have shrieked, whimpered, fainted, or collapsed into a fetal position. But since Jenn was not home and there were no witnesses to the event, I am able to say, I did not do any of those things.

Also, the spider is a liar.

For no matter what it says, I just squinted, then looked in its multi-faceted eyes and said, "I know what you're thinking punk! Go ahead, make my day … "

Loon Tales

Steve Galea

Unfortunately, those lines only work in old movies starring Clint Eastwood. The spider did not make my day at all. In fact, I suspect it ruined a lot of nights going forward.

That's because it just stood there staring me down, while blocking the route to my gun cabinet.

To be clear, I don't have a problem with large spiders, but I do have a healthy respect for them. For one thing, I have seen first-hand what they can do to a sister's pajama party. Plus, I was once hunting in the U.S. when a colleague of mine swatted a large spider off my shoulder whose bite he said, "Would have put me in hospital for a week."

I just turned to him and casually shrugged it off – which is not that easy to do when you are sprinting down the trail and yelling "Eeeeeekkkk!"

In any case, there I was with not a single sprintable trail in sight, and a big spider giving me attitude.

It was then that I remembered the cardinal rule when confronting dangerous game animals. But since there was no one around for me to outrun, I decided to resort to the second rule.

That's right – I armed myself with a broom and dustpan.

(Full disclosure: Our legal team has advised me that suggesting readers should arm themselves with a broom and dustpan when confronting dangerous game animals is highly irresponsible and places the newspaper in legal jeopardy. So, on the advice of counsel, I'm retracting that statement. To be clear, if you follow my initial statement and get in trouble by, say, confronting an angry cow moose with a broom and dustpan, that's totally on you. Also, it's kind of insulting that, given the choice between finishing this column and confronting an angry cow moose with a broom and dustpan, you chose the latter. Thanks a lot.)

But I digress.

What happened next was almost unfair. There we were, circling each other in hallway. One, a highly evolved, intelligent creature, the other brandishing a broom and dustpan.

I won't go into the details, because frankly they are not for the faint of heart. Let's just say, it was a tough fight, but when the spider attacked, I did not panic.

I just looked at him and casually shrugged it off – which is not that easy to do when you are sprinting down the trail and yelling "Eeeeeekkkk!"

pic *of the* past

This week's Pic of the Past was taken on Main Street Haliburton, sometime in the 1940s. Nellie Dart, nee Schell, on the right, and "Bubbles" Watt, who later married Ken Pritchard. The Curry Motors gas pumps used to stand where Rexall stands today. /FILE

Volunteers who care

ON THE first Saturday evening in May, I walked through the doors of our local legion and immediately felt that something special was unfolding. It was, on the surface, a fundraiser for the Haliburton Red Wolves (Haliburton Special Olympics team) - but it was also so much more than that. It was a gathering filled with kindness, inclusion, and genuine joy, and I found myself deeply grateful to be part of a community that shows up so wholeheartedly.

I have always believed in the quiet power of community, but that evening brought it to life in such a tangible way. Everywhere I looked, there were volunteers - steady, generous, and present. From the warm greetings at the door to the seamless flow of the evening, their care shaped the entire experience. It reminded me that behind every strong community are people who simply choose to give.

Green meadow

Tales from the great

Lynda Shadbolt

The Haliburton Red Wolves have been part of this community for nearly three decades, and that legacy was easy to feel in the room. There was a sense of belonging that went far beyond sport. This is a team where athletes are supported, encouraged, and celebrated - and where volunteers create a space for that to happen week after week, year after year. It is inspiring to see that kind of quiet, enduring commitment.

As the evening unfolded, about 150 of us - families, friends, neighbours, and athletes - shared in something both joyful and meaningful. There was a beautiful vibe in the air, the kind that comes when people gather because they truly want to be there. Volunteers moved easily among us, setting up, serving, organizing, always ensuring everyone felt included. Their presence was like a steady thread, quietly holding everything together.

Dinner, prepared by Boshkung Smoke House, was delicious, and once again it was the volunteers who helped to ensure that everyone was cared for. They served, cleared, and checked in, offering small acts of kindness that might go unnoticed but matter deeply. I found myself appreciating the meal and the spirit in which it was shared.

When the music began - thanks to Canoe FM - the energy shifted into something even more joyful. The dance floor filled quickly, and what I loved most was how effortlessly people came together. Volunteers, athletes, friends, and strangers danced side by side. There was no hesitation or separation - just laughter, movement, and a shared sense of freedom. In those moments, it didn't feel like anyone was giving or receiving. We were simply part of something joyful together.

One of my favourite moments also came during the silent auction. Tables were filled with beautiful items donated by local artists and businesses, each piece reflecting another layer of community support. When I realized I was the highest bidder for a stunning piece of fabric artwork by Jane Selbie, I felt a quiet sense of connection. It wasn't just about taking something home - it was about being part of a circle of generosity sustained by so many giving hearts.

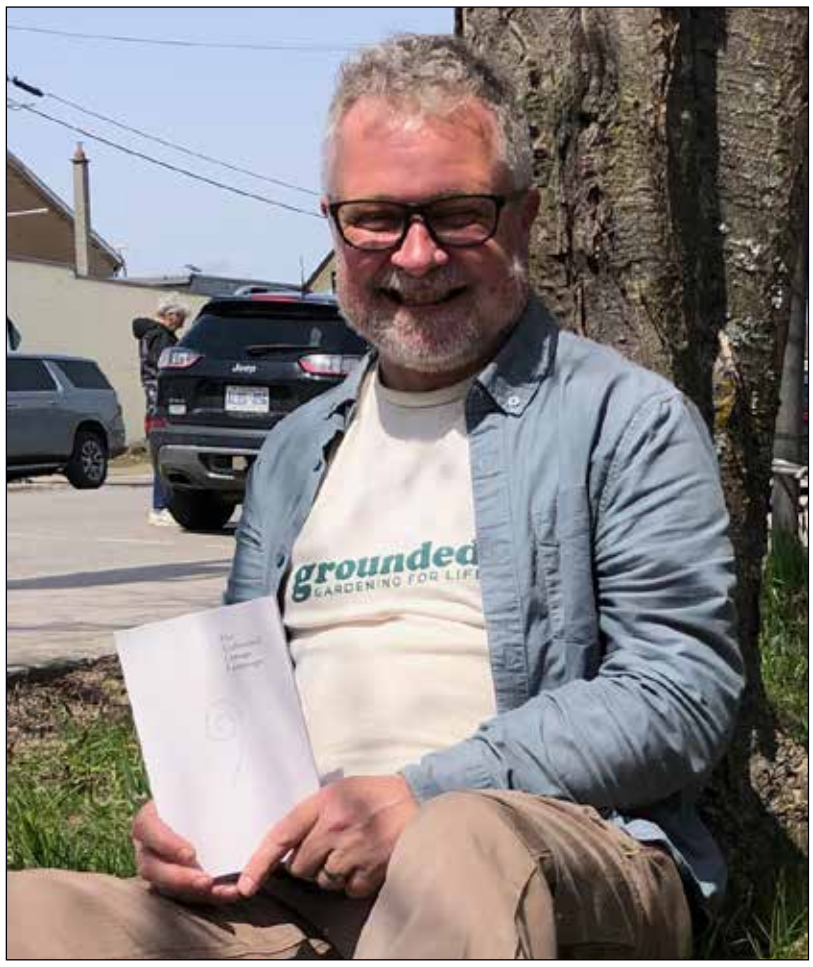
What stayed with me most was seeing the athletes - their smiles, their laughter, their confidence. Those qualities are nurtured over time by people who show up consistently, who encourage and care. Volunteers help build that foundation, often without fanfare, and the impact is profound.

As I left that evening, I reflected on how naturally the spirit of giving flowed. Everyone offered what they could; time, energy, presence. The volunteers embodied that spirit in the most genuine way.

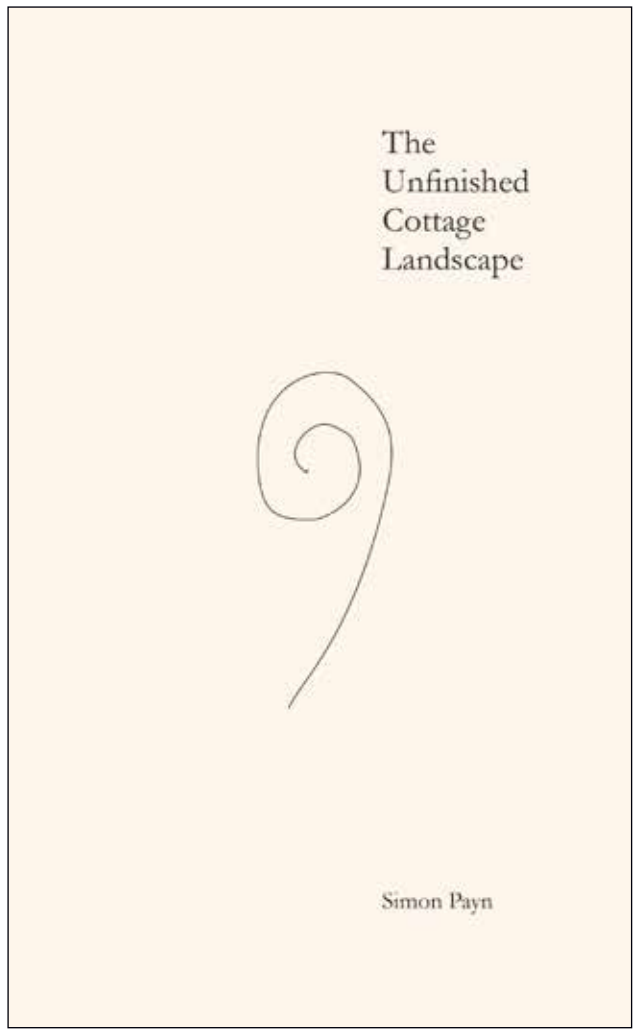
In a world that can feel rushed or disconnected, this evening reminded me that community is something we actively create. It is built by people who step forward, who care, and who choose to be part of something larger than themselves. The Haliburton Red Wolves are about sport, yes - but more than that, they are about belonging. And thanks to the volunteers, that sense of belonging continues to grow and ripple outward.

Author takes stress out of cottage landscaping

IVY KATZ
Journalist



Simon Payn holds his new book: The Unfinished Cottage Landscape. /IVY KATZ staff



The Unfinished Cottage Landscape is not your average gardening book. It is not didactic or prescriptive, nor is it full of many hardto-understand terms. Simon Payn's new book is a philosophy on life and our relationships to each other as much as it is a book about landscaping and gardening.

Payn is the founding owner of Grounded, providing landscaping and gardening services throughout the county, as well as the writer of a weekly advertorial on gardening. He is also the curator of the garden at Lucas House.

Payn's book is a visual journey; peppered throughout with his simple yet infused-withmeaning illustrations breathing off the page, like a quiet visual guide, taking the reader on a journey, the way a natural path off the beaten road will lead the hiker to all the best places. The book feels natural. "Part of the design is part of the message," said Payn.

Originally from the United Kingdom and influenced by a range of gardeners, from gardener Beth Chatto to Indigenous botanist and environmentalist Robin Wall Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Payn says he does not subscribe to any one philosophy, yet his meditations on mindfulness and Eastern philosophy and Taoism shine through in a way that just makes sense. Payn alludes to the garden the way one would relate to a significant other. He nudges us along the path of understanding, illustrating that building a garden is not any different than nurturing a relationship; having a garden is akin to being a part of a community. If you are there, the actions you take may determine your role in the community, but if you are not there, the community will still go on without you, whether you like it to or not.

Instead, Payn shows us how to be a part of the garden community, rather than trying to be the owners of the garden. Quite simply, according to Payn, that is where the problem lies.

Being present, and learning how to be in the moment with the garden, is one way to tackle the deeply ingrained vision of the man-made manicured lawn and constant back-breaking work a lawn such as that requires, only to rarely give momentary satisfaction before needing constant work to keep it under control again. Even the word "stewardship" does not sit well with Payn, it is a word that gets close to what he is trying to communicate, but still puts the human "at the centre" of the equation.

This is the equation Payn is trying to change. "Beth Chatto's 'Right Plant, Right Place' maxim was very revolutionary at the time," says Payn, "I like to say: *very* right plant, very right place." Payn uses a gentle "let the landscape guide you" methodology and is an advocate for native plants and understanding your garden's ecology, or rather, knowing which plant will thrive in which place and understanding how to create a garden that is harmonious with the insects and birds, while still maintaining an aesthetic appeal. "Time can become an ally rather than an obstacle. It is a design material," writes Payn, "You can't buy the lessons the land teaches you but you can show up for them."

Quite simply, Payn is putting forward an intuitive way to relate to your landscape. "We are always fighting the land - let the land guide you - the land is going somehere," he said. "Instead, gardening should be a symbiotic relationship, like a tango, we go one way, then the other way, and it is still a beautiful dance."

Despite the originality of this work, Payn insists that his gardening and ecology is a long-standing practice. "It's only the last couple hundred years since the industrial revolution that we are trying to control everything," he said.

"Ecological and native plant design is a relatively new movement that is taking off right now."

Designed and written by Simon Payn and printed in Manitoba, Canada, *The Unfinished Cottage Landscape* is about so much more than just gardening.

Visit GroundedGardens.ca/unfinished to order the book or find it in Master's Book Store.

Minden Memories

Postcard of the Red Umbrella Inn. On reverse: "The Beauty Spot of the Highlands of Haliburton. Situated Among the Slender White Birches on the Winding Shores of Twelve Mile Lake. Good Fishing, Swimming, Boating & Other Activities. ` The Place Where New Friends Meet ` Your Hosts - Monica & Don MacNab" /Photo courtesy of the Minden Hills Cultural Centre

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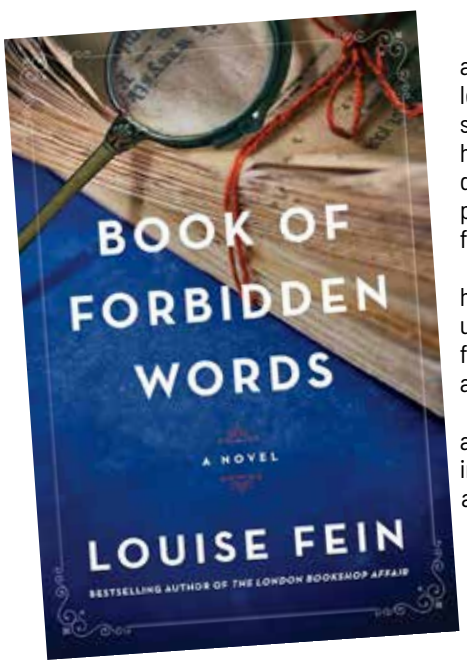
Book of the Week



In 1552, as the printing press spreads across Europe, new ideas begin to challenge church and state, triggering censorship, book burnings, and the hunt for heretics. When ex-nun Lysbette brings a dangerous manuscript to Charlotte's Paris print shop, neither woman foresees how far the powerful will go to silence it.

In 1952, McCarthy-era America, lonely housewife Milly's quiet suburban life is upended when a 400-year-old manuscript from her past resurfaces, pulling her into a growing web of danger.

Across centuries, Lysbette, Charlotte, and Milly are bound together by one truth: in every era, the spread of ideas comes at a cost.

Book of Forbidden Words by Louise Fein is available to borrow from the Haliburton County Public Library. Visit haliburtonlibrary.ca to place a hold or learn more.

Master Gardeners offer free spring workshop for seniors

THOMAS SMITH
Journalist

Gardening is a healthy activity for the mind, body, and soul.

It is easy to lose yourself in your day-to-day happenings but every now and then,you deserve to stop, go outside and take in the nature around you.

Gardening is a healthy activity for people of all ages, especially seniors. On Sunday, May 31, seniors will have the opportunity to improve their gardening knowledge and get their hands dirty at the Haliburton County Master Gardeners spring planting workshop.

Last fall, the Master Gardeners held a similar workshop at Hyland Crest. The workshop involved teaching participants how to plant bulbs in the fall, perennials, shrubbery, and pruning plants before the winter.

Registration for the event far surpassed their expectations and indicated a huge demand for more planting workshops.

Under the guidance of Shelley Fellows, fellow Master Gardener, those interested can take advantage of the spring thaw. Participants will be taught the ins and outs of container planting, vegetable gardening, and answering any questions that people have.

Gardening in your senior years is achievable with the right accommodations, assures Fellows. With the proper preparation, accommodations, and adjustments, anyone can achieve their gardening goals.

This workshop is possible through the Senior's Community Grant program. As part of the grant, the program dives into the physical benefits of gardening. To improve flexibility and prepare for lifting and light exercise, participants will be taught a variety of stretches they can utilize.

As a social event, there will be plenty of opportunities to make new connections and socialize over refreshments.

The event will be taking place at the Highland Crest Long Term Care facility in Minden.

Seniors will have the opportunity to improve their gardening knowledge and get their hands dirty. /FILE

Fellows says that Hyland Crest was the immediate choice for the fall planting workshop, as they noticed that the gardens were in need of pruning and maintenance.

Hyland Crest was quick to agree to the program, with the main instruction taking place inside. The hands-on portion of the workshop will be outside working in Hyland Crest's garden beds.

Being present at Hyland Crest also has the added benefit of meeting its residents, and letting them come out and watch the gardening process.

"We want gardens that are cheerful, homey, and remind residents of their gardens back home," said Fellows.

"It has been great," she added. "The fall workshop was so much fun."

With an outpour of support, Fellows is excited to be able to offer a different version of the workshop for the spring.

There is a popular practice in Japan called 'forest bathing' which is said to have immense health and wellness benefits of being in nature. Similar to this concept, Fellows says that being around plants, breathing in pheromones they release, and listening to the sounds of wildlife are hugely beneficial for people.

"It is very gratifying for us," says Fellows. "Putting on these workshops is a great deal of work."

She is hopeful that participants will develop an interest in volunteering with Hyland Crest.

In her years of being a gardener, Fellows says that gardening has taught her that every little decision matters in your life.

From the beginning of your garden while making decisions to choose native plants, refraining from pesticides, additives into the soil, and encouraging bugs and bird friendly species, every aspect of your garden can make a difference and contribute to the natural world around you.

As the event will be taking place outdoors, the organizers say that participants should come prepared for the weather. The event will be running rain or shine. Beyond invaluable gardening knowledge, participants will also receive a pair of gloves, clippers, and refreshments.

Participation is entirely free. To participate, please register by phone by calling 705-488-2613.

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She shoots, she scores

The Junior Red Hawk Girls Soccer team took to the field this past Monday to host IE Weldon Secondary School, visiting from Lindsay.
/TIM YANO staff photographer

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Senior soccer skills

On the same day as the Juniors, the Senior Girls Soccer team took to the field following the first game, once again facing off against the senior IE Weldon team. /TIM YANO staff photographer

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Kelly Outram, owner of K.O. Martial Arts has found huge success in fostering a healthy, active martial arts community in Haliburton. With the increasing success, he is excited to expand the business in a larger venue. /THOMAS SMITH Staff

Martial arts connects all ages

from page 1

he decided that he was spending more time in *World of Warcraft's* Azeroth than the real world.

"I needed a way to spend my time that was more connected with reality," said Outram.

Looking inward, Outram recognized that he loved fighting games like *Super Smash Bros., Melee* and *Guitar Hero.*

Reflecting what he loved about those games, he took up martial arts and playing the guitar.

"I started learning kung-fu in my 20s and have been going steady since then," said Outram. "I have been going steady since then under different martial arts."

His winter life led him to destinations like Montreal, Kansas City, Halifax, Taiwan, China, and Costa Rica. Halifax holds a special place in his heart as that is where he learned Tai Chi.

"Each of those places, I did a different kind of training while I was away," he said.

Returning to Haliburton permanently in 2018, Outram committed himself to steadily training in Jiu Jitsu. To do so, he regularly drives to Lindsay and Bracebridge.

For those who are new to these terms, Karate, meaning 'empty hand' in Japanese, is a technique that is a striking art, which primarily incorporates punches and kicks. Tai Chi involves flowing body motions that can be utilized for self defence. In the modern day, it is often practiced as both an exercise and meditative technique. Qigong involves simple, repetitive movements that incorporate body posture, movement, breathing, and meditation.

You may recognize his name from Outram Tree Solutions, a business he has run with his brother in 2015. Over the past 11 years, Outram says that they have utilized their own individual strengths in successfully running the business.

"I hit a point when I knew this was where I wanted to be," said Outram. "Of all the places I have seen in the world, I knew that the place that I started at was my favourite and that is pretty special."

When not cutting down trees, Outram can be found in his own martial art studio. Located in the downstairs section of Stedman's Mall in Haliburton, walking into K. O. Martial Arts greets you with floor to wall mats, soft enough to walk on.

Opening his own studio fulfilled a longtime dream for Outram.

"I had been at it for quite a while. I had gained a lot of skills," said Outram. "I was getting good at tai-chi, kung-fu and karate. I wanted to practice more often. The real reason I wanted to start teaching originally was that I could draw people in who also wanted to practice all the time and create a community where we can practice martial arts together."

When he started K.O. Martial Arts, he would have never expected for it to become the thriving business that it is.

"I had been going to all these different places to learn martial arts," said Outram. "There wasn't anything here, so I thought if there is nothing else going on, where I am at, I should start teaching."

To match his skills as an instructor, he increased his own time practicing a wide variety of martial arts. Sparing with friends, he realized his own skill was surpassing his opponents. With his own studio, he could share the skills he had learned back to the community that supported him as a kid.

"I am very close to a black belt in jiu jitsu now," said Outram. "I am very close to getting a white belt in judo."

Like the students he accepts, Outram's own skill is continuously improving. Unlike many other martial artists or mixed martial arts fighters, Outram chooses not to be a competitive fighter.

"I don't have the hunger for glory that drives people to competition," he said.

While some martial arts use different belting systems to show rank, black belt remains the highest rank of belt in karate. For Outram, his black belt represents how he has grown as a person.

"What it is supposed to represent is how much skill you develop from the time and effort you put in," he said.

Of course, any martial artist wouldn't be up to snuff without watching the classic Bruce Lee and Shaw Brothers films. A lover of both practicing the sport and watching the greats, Outram still watches the classics to watch his heroes.

As an instructor, Outram teaches martial arts to those of all ages.

The growth of K.O. Martial Arts has not been a solo effort. Over the years, he has added Dakota Desousa and Nick Thompson to instruct in the dojo.

Starting with two nights per week, his business now teaches classes Monday to Thursday. "Right now, where I am at, has exceeded my expectations for where I thought I would get to," said Outram. "I am thrilled with how things have grown."

With filled kids' classes and an increased presence of weekly adult practitioners, Outram says that it is exciting to experience the interconnectedness of the community. Often, parents will attend classes after their children.

"I am really seeing a sense of community forming around this," said Outram. "People have something to do, it is a good use of time."

A positive use of time, martial arts makes you feel good, gets you out to socialize, and you meet new people.

"You are not making enemies," said Outram. "You are coming here to practice with your friends."

Martial arts are for everyone and practitioners benefit from those of all body types and sizes.

"The larger your community, the more people you have to practice with," he said.

K.O. Martial Arts has been organically growing. With this growth, Outram has purchased the building that formerly housed Happy Daze Automotive.

While it is still being worked on, he hopes to move K. O. Martial Arts to Minden this summer.

Outram would like to thank for the continuous opportunities to practice Qigong at Dimensions. Until May 25, there will be free Qigong offered at the Haliburton Legion as part of the Seniors' Active Living Centre. This class will be offered on May 18 and 25 and runs from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

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Halls Lake commits to safer water

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

Every drop of water has value. With many drops, a tidal wave can form.

Out of all the lake associations in Ontario, the Halls and Hawk Lake Property Owners Association (HHLPOA) was chosen by the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Association for their pilot program in developing a source water protection plan.

"Our goal with this plan was to understand, identify and communicate where we, as individual property owners are within the wider region, what makes Halls Lake unique, why protecting our drinking water is important, and what responsibilities we have as property owners to protect our drinking water," opened Shelley Fellows to AH council.

The group consisted of 18 volunteers, all property owners from the lakes.

Terry Rees, sustainability advocate and water conservation expert, mentored the group alongside the development of their plan. Frank Figuli, program coordinator of U-Links, also provided his expertise throughout the process.

Located in the Haliburton Highlands, the Halls and Hawk Lakes provide vital connection between waterbodies across Algonquin Highlands. Consisting of Big and Little Hawk Lakes, Halls Lake, and the Kennisis river, the water that flows through their lakes and rivers is finite.

Once it is gone, or polluted, it is incredibly hard to come back from.

"We have had the commitment to water quality testing," explained Fellows in a recent interview. Other than their history of activism towards water quality conservation, Fellows says that FOCA did not provide an exact explanation as to why they were chosen.

"We have a really great community," said Fellows. "A very vibrant group of volunteers."

At the presentation to council, Fellows said that the group identified four designated threats to clean drinking water.

These threats included the development of the land, destruction of wetlands, septic systems, and contamination from things like pesticides and fertilizers.

"You can't kill off your insects and still expect your lake to be healthy," she explained.

Throughout the process, researchers were invited and taken across the lake to conduct sampling.

Above all, Fellows says that the key to their success is an overwhelming interest in water quality and drinking water conservation.

For Fellows, the involvement in the pilot project means that their organization will be the leader in analyzing and acting towards protecting drinking water.

Historically, Elvin Johnson Park has had to close due to the contamination of water from E. coli. The source of this bacteria is goose feces. Attracted to nicely cut lawns, geese walk up onto the shore of the park and defecate over the premises.

According to Fellows, Canada geese will not be attracted to climbing up onto the beach if their line of sight to the meadow is broken. Like humans not enjoying vegetation underwater touch our feet, geese do not like having to climb through vegetation.

In a request to council, the group has suggested the planting of native plant species at Elvin Johnson Park. As both a test in deterring geese and acting as a model example of the project, the group suggested planting some native plant species during their native plant and shrub sale on May 23.

Council expressed support of the idea. However, with two councillors away, they could not be certain as of last Thursday's meeting.

In continuation with the plan, Mayor Liz Danielsen advised the organization to get in contact with Chris Card, the parks, recreation,and trails coordinator.

In the later interview, Fellows confirmed the group's intent of planting native species at the park, including high bush cranberry and red azure dogwood.

Fellows says that while it may be daunting to be the first to do something, she says that the work has been exciting and their results have been very gratifying.

"We want to ensure that water is not just safe for us, but for our children in 20 years," said Fellows. "People have been very receptive and invested."

While emerald green lawns remain the standard and normalized beauty for houses in Ontario, Fellows says that it is about time that people recognize that landscaping beauty ideal is not appropriate for the Haliburton Highlands, nor is it supportive of a healthy environment.

"There are gaps in our understanding of Halls Lake," said Fellows.

Another way that HHLPOA is going to do is to have a student conduct a thesis on the causeway on the lake. The thesis will take around two semesters.

After a lumber mill on the lake closed, a causeway was built for a road to connect the main road to an island on the lake.

The development of this causeway is believed to have long-lasting effects on the flow of water in the lake with the bay to the north becoming exceptionally shallow; a process known as eutrophication.

Deputy Mayor Dailloux encouraged documenting the process to share with other property associations and property owners to teach others, which Fellows happily agreed with.

"I think people have forgotten the past and things that have happened," urged Councillor Julia Shortreed. "It is really, really important to remind everybody that they need to test their drinking water."

Mayor Liz Danielsen hopes the group can bring info about the sign and what they want to plant before the May 21 meeting.

Transport Canada / Transports Canada

Canadian Navigable Waters Act

The Municipality of Dysart et al
..... hereby gives notice that an
(Owner – Individual or company name)

application has been made to the Navigable Waters Registry, pursuant to the *Canadian Navigable Waters Act* for approval of the work described herein and its site and plans.

Pursuant to paragraph 10(1)(b) of the said Act,

The Municipality of Dysart et al
……. has deposited with the Minister of Transport,
(Owner – Individual or company name)

on the on-line Common Project Search Registry (http://cps.canada.ca/) under the registry number 14931, a description of the following work, its site and plans:

- The project includes removal of existing truss bridge and partial removal of abutments;
- Construction of new abutments behind the existing;
- Launching of new modular bridge;
- Reconstruction of approach embankments, including some retaining structures;
- Installation of new code compliant barrier system and guide rail; and
- Site cleanup and restoration.

in, on, over, under, through or

across..... the Drag River
(name of the river, the lake or other navigable water)

at ……Head Lake Rotary Park in Haliburton
(name of place where work is to be located)

in front of lot number ..... Lot 17, Concession 8, County of Haliburton
(or at the foot of such a street, etc.) (see note below)

Comments regarding the effect of this work on marine navigation can be sent through the Common Project Search site mentioned above under the Comment section (search by the above referenced number) or if you do not have access to the internet, by sending your comments directly to:

Director of Public Works
Municipality of Dysart et al
135 Maple Avenue PO Box 389, Haliburton Ontario, Canada K0M 1S0

Posted at…. Haliburton, Ontario ..... this …12….. day of ……May……., 20 …26…
(City, Province) (day) (Month) (year)
Municipality of Dysart et al
(full name of owner)

Transport Canada (TC) will not make your comments on a project available to the public on the online public registry. However, any information related to a work is considered as unclassified public record and could be accessible upon legal request. As such, the information and records provided should not contain confidential or sensitive information. If you want to provide confidential or sensitive information that you think should not be made public, please contact TC before submitting it.

NOTE: The subject site (Head Lake Pedestrian Bridge) is located at 45°2'48.8"N 78°30'44.5"W (45.046897, -78.512351).

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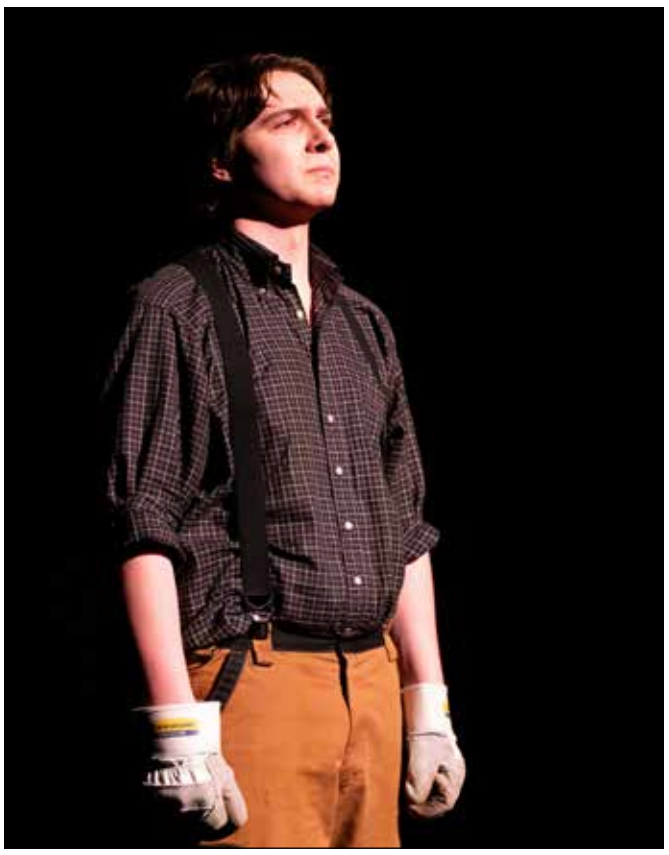
Celebrating a classic

Haliburton Highlands Secondary School brought a blast from the past to the local stage, with a current rendition of the well-known play, *Fahrenheit 451,* based on the book by Ray Bradbury. The dystopian storyline was presented by up and coming local actors involved with the high school drama club, and was directed by HHSS teacher Meghan Mardus. The show hit the stage last week, with audiences celebrating the performances and dedication to the dramatic story. /TIM YANO staff photographer



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A little Dolly in Dorset

THOMAS SMITH
Journalist

Books are the tickets to let imaginations soar.

When you read to your kids, you are introducing them to an entire universe of words and phrases that they will have never heard of before.

With young developing brains acting like sponges, there are huge benefits to reading to your kids and making storytime a part of your daily routine.

When local library lover Pat Sims-Eastwood learned that the Dolly Parton Imagination Library in the Lake of Bays area had ceased, she took it upon herself to reignite the program and support local literacy.

As a child, Sims-Eastwood was an avid reader. Recollecting her youth, she wishes that she could have been introduced to reading earlier in life.

"I think kids and books belong together," said Sims-Eastwood. "Books for kids weren't what they are like now."

> *"I think kids and books belong together..."*
>
> — Pat Sims–Eastwood, Dolly Parton Imagination Library

One of her favourite memories is going to her local library every week, with her book bag overflowing.

"I was going to my local library every Saturday morning," she said.

When she had her own kids, she fell deeper in love with reading as an activity to do with them.

The Dolly Parton Imagination Library is one way she is fostering literacy in her community. Restarting the program in 2023, Sims-Eastwood used her own savings to pay for the program, inheriting the list of benefactors who had been participating before.

While most Imagination Libraries are supported by local community groups, the Dolly Parton Foundation made an exception for her. Using her own savings to fuel the program, Sims-Eastwood says that it is around $4 per child that benefits from the program.

Over the years, some community groups have stepped forward to support the program financially, especially the local Lions Clubs.

Kids that are registered receive one book per month that their family can keep and accumulate as a library. They will continue to receive books until the month they turn five years old and books are shipped directly to their front door.

Reading to infants, toddlers, and pre-schoolers has proven benefits. Reading a book to your child every day can introduce hundreds of thousands of words to them. Talking to your child and answering their questions supports their development in comprehension skills, grammatical ability, and imagination.

Every new book contributes towards new thoughts to explore, learn, and explain the world around them.

Sims-Eastwood has since expanded the Imagination Library program to Honey Harbour and Gravenhurst.

In total, Sims-Eastwood leads the literary charge for over 100 kids across Muskoka and Algonquin Highlands.

"It's well above what the Dolly Imagination Library expects," she said.

Currently eight of the kids are situated in the Dorset area. With support from the Imagination library, she regularly posts on Facebook when she can take on additional kids.

With a low birth rate in the area, it is likely she is aware of every newborn.

For Sims-Eastwood, the benefit for kids goes beyond the immediate joy of them cracking into a new book.

She is well aware that early literacy leads to better job prospects, food security, health, and wellness for themselves. The benefits are not just an immediate joy, but long term impact for kids in lower income communities.

"Some things are very burdened right now," said Sims-Eastwood. The less parents have to spend on books, the more money can go towards the essentials like rent and food.

"All I ever hear is that parents love it," she said.

Sims-Eastwood has seen great growth in the Imagination Libraries throughout the area. Looking towards the future, she would like to see community groups take up the mantle in supporting the program. She also plans on approaching local businesses to see if they would be willing to support the program.

If you are interested in supporting the Imagination Library, please contact her by calling 705-644-2741 or email dpil.muskoka@gmail.com

Any money that is donated towards the program directly supports kids receiving free books. No money goes towards a salary or other fees, assures Sims-Eastwood.

"It's lovely knowing these kids are smiling when they get their books," she said.

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Drug strategies discussed in upcoming info sessions

The Haliburton, Kawartha Lakes Northumberland (HKLN) Drug Strategy is bringing community partners, service providers, municipal leaders, and people with lived and living experience together for *Connected Communities: A Haliburton, Kawartha Lakes, Northumberland Drug Strategy Conversation Series,* regional symposiums focused on dialogue, shared learning and collaboration around substance use and the Four Pillars: Prevention, Treatment, Community Safety and Harm Reduction.

The first session will take place on May 28 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Victoria Park Armoury, 210 Kent Street West, Lindsay and is intended for residents and stakeholders in the City of Kawartha Lakes and Haliburton County. A second session will be held on June 17 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Best Western in Cobourg, for those in Northumberland County.

These symposiums will create space for meaningful dialogue, knowledge sharing, and collaboration across sectors responding to substance use and its impacts.

Each event will feature opening remarks, expert presentations, facilitated breakout discussions, a panel conversation, and a plenary session. Attendees will also have opportunities to network and connect with others working across the region. Lunch will be provided.

"These symposiums are an opportunity to bring together voices from across our region to share what's working, identify gaps, and strengthen how we respond to substance use in our communities," said Ashley Smoke, HKLN Drug Strategy Coordinator. "By focusing on prevention, treatment, harm reduction, and community safety, we can build more coordinated and compassionate approaches that meet people where they are."

Participants will engage in discussions aimed at identifying local priorities, sharing promising practices, and exploring opportunities to enhance coordinated responses across the HKLN region.

Registration is required, and individuals must register for their preferred session, including Lindsay (serving City of Kawartha Lakes and Haliburton County) and Northumberland County, Cobourg.

Connected Communities: A Haliburton, Kawartha Lakes, Northumberland Drug Strategy Conversation Series

Event Details:

Lindsay (City of Kawartha Lakes, Haliburton County)
Date: May 28
Time: 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Location: Victoria Park Armoury, 210 Kent Street West, Lindsay

Cobourg (Northumberland County)
Date: June 17
Time: 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Location: Best Western, Cobourg

For More Information

- Visit the HKLN Drug Strategy website to learn more about current harm reduction efforts.
- View the weekly Opioid Overdose Report produced by the Lakelands Public Health Unit
- Report a drug poisoning or substances of concern in your community.
- Sign up to receive Drug Poisoning Alerts.

Media Contact, Ashley Smoke, Coordinator, HKLN Drug Strategy Committee, 437-778-2336, hklndrugstrategy@parn.ca

About the HKLN Drug Strategy

The HKLN Drug Strategy is a partnership of over 35 organizations, departments, and individuals across the three counties working directly or indirectly in social services, healthcare, or in harm reduction. Working collaboratively, the HKLN Drug Strategy strives to foster supportive and safe environments that promote the health and resiliency of individuals, families, and communities, and works to reduce the harms and stigma associated with substance use. Visit hklndrugstrategy.com.

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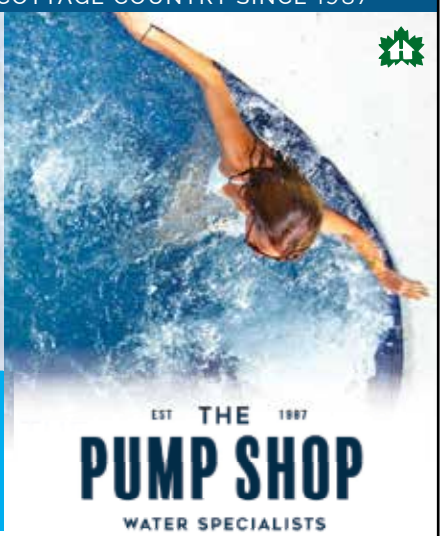

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GARAGE / MOVING SALE

Moving Yard Sale. **Saturday May 16th and Sunday May 17th. 9am-4pm.** 4177 Kennisis Lake Road., Haliburton. Furniture, tools, household, antiques, fishing boat, trailer, mens bike, bike racks, wedding, chicken items.

Moving Sale. **May 16th and 17th. 9am to 3pm.** 1200 Ritchie Falls Rd. Yard art, tools, some furniture from the house, lawn and outdoor tools, and miscellaneous items. Rain or Shine.

Garage/Street Sale. **Saturday May 16th. 9:00am - 3:00pm.** Mistivale Rd. & Hyacinth, Minden. Follow the Pink and White Signs.

YARD SALE. **Saturday May 16, 8-12**, multiple houses Windover Drive Minden. Including antiques, garden furniture, children's toys and more.

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Five years of experience and 310S and DZ licences required.
Hourly rate for this CUPE unionized is $37.27.

One (1) Seasonal 1 Operator/Labourer (until Oct)
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We thank all who apply for this position; however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

The County of Haliburton is an equal employer. Accommodation can be provided in all steps of the hiring process, please contact Human Resources for further details.

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Send your resume by **May 29**, mail or email to **HCHC, 1 Victoria Street, Haliburton, ON, K0M1S0 manager@haliburtonhousing.com**

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CELEBRATION OF LIFE

A Celebration of Life will be held in John Miller's honour on Saturday, May 16, 2026, at 11 am at the HALIBURTON UNITED CHURCH, 10 George St, Haliburton, A luncheon will follow.

As an expression of sympathy, donations in John's memory can be made to the Haliburton 4Cs Food Bank, Woodlands Wildlife Sanctuary, or Places for People.

IN MEMORIAM

In Memory of My Mother
Elizabeth Cepecauer
Who died May 5, 2012

"Gone are the days
we used to share.
But in my heart
you are always there.
The gates of memory
will never close.
I miss you more
than anyone knows."

With tender love and deep regret,
I who love you, will never forget.

Love your daughter
Clara & Family

With Sympathy

OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of
Edward "Fast Eddie" Sidney Burke

(Retired from the Canadian Armed Forces at the rank of Sgt and was a former jail guard with the local OPP)

Passed away peacefully at the Haliburton Hospital on Saturday, December 27, 2025 with his loving wife by his side in his 86th year.

Beloved husband and friend of Sheila Arlene Burke (nee Watt) for 52 years. Dear son of the late Hugh and Edna (nee Watson) Burke. Loving brother of twin sisters, Phyllis (Lucien) Douville and Eunice Burke (the late Rod Leach). Fondly remembered by his nieces; Paulette (Todd) Francoeur, Denise Douville (Mark Johns), Michelle (Garett) Keirns, by his nephew Will Richardson and also by their families.

In keeping with Ed's wishes, a Legion Memorial Service to Celebrate his Life will be held at the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., 127 Bobcaygeon Rd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0 on Tuesday, May 26, 2026 at 12:00 o'clock noon. Reception to follow in the Monk-Cray Family Centre at the funeral home. An Interment at the Evergreen Cemetery, Haliburton to follow.

Memorial Donations to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation (HHHSF) or to the Minden Health Care Auxiliary would be appreciated by the family.

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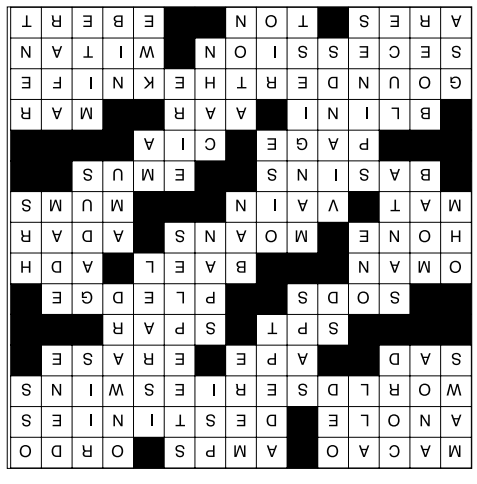

SUDOKU SOLUTION

6	7	1	4	3	8	2	9	5
5	8	4	7	2	9	1	6	3
3	9	2	6	1	5	8	4	7
1	2	7	9	5	6	4	3	8
9	4	5	1	8	3	6	7	2
8	6	3	2	4	7	5	1	9
7	5	9	8	6	4	3	2	1
2	3	6	5	9	1	7	8	4
4	1	8	3	7	2	9	5	6

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6				3			9	5
5	8					1	6	
							4	
1				5	6		3	
	4		1					2
8		3				5		
	5		8	6				
								4
				7				

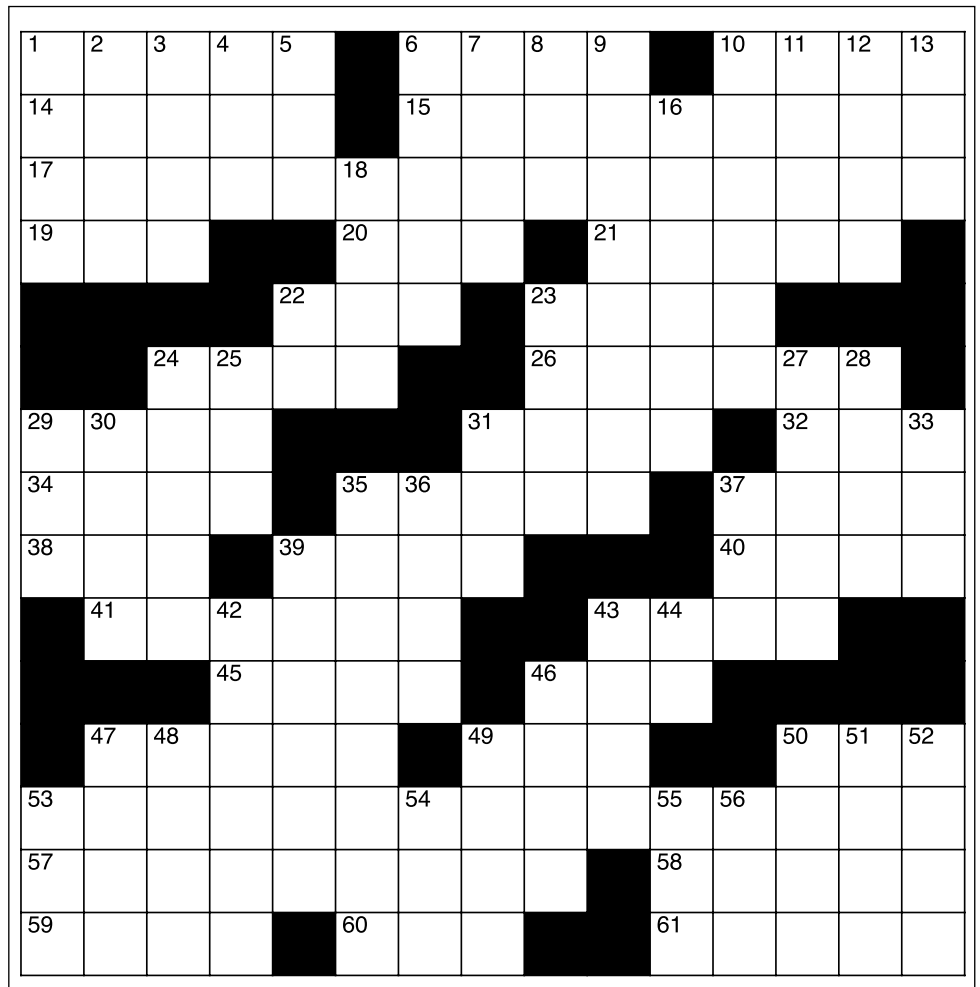
Level: Intermediate

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers on page 21



CLUES ACROSS
1. Notable casino destination
6. Current units
10. Roman military unit
14. American lizard
15. Fates
17. The Yankees have lots of these
19. Unhappy
20. Mimic
21. Remove from the record
22. Where cargo ships dock (abbr.)
23. A way to fight
24. Turfs
26. Contract
29. Country along the Arabian peninsula
31. Tree species
32. Pituitary gland secretion (abbr.)
34. Perfect
35. "Partner" to groans
37. Jewish calendar month
38. Where wrestlers work
39. Egotistical
40. Potted plants
41. Containers
43. Large, flightless birds
45. Part of a book
46. American spies
47. Pancakes made of buckwheat flour
49. Swiss river
50. Disfigure
53. Have surgery
57. Formal withdrawal
58. Early English council
59. Area units
60. 2,000 lbs.
61. Siskel and __

CLUES DOWN
1. Animal jaws
2. Small water buffalo
3. An appliance has one
4. Every
5. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
6. Very skilled
7. No more than what is specified
8. Tire measurement
9. Towers
10. Forward
11. Jacob __, American journalist
12. Vale
13. Former CIA
16. Middle Eastern nation
18. Exhausts
22. South Dakota
23. The complete duration of something
24. Kids love him
25. Singular
27. Cod genus
28. Mild yellow Dutch cheese
29. Resistance unit
30. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
31. Cast out
33. 60-minute periods
35. Most worn
36. European river
37. Atomic mass unit
39. Items of food
42. Body parts
43. Ireland
44. Partner to Pa
46. Sammy __, songwriter
47. Dutch settler
48. Full-grown pike fish
49. Sun or solar disk
50. Minute arachnid
51. From a distance
52. A monthly expense
53. Young women's association
54. Brazilian state
55. Air freight provider
56. Pointed end of a pen
54. RIO
55. KWE
56. NIB

Answers on page 21

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Lack of storage responsible for high water

by Jerry Grozelle

Mother Nature is responsible for the Gul River spilling over its banks.

All of the lakes in the headwaters of the Gull River watershed are at, or slightly above, capacity, says Blaine Trumbley, a water control technician with the Trent-Severn Waterway (TSW).

"It's a critical time," Trumbley said. "The lakes are brim full and we have to pass the water on down the system."

With the lakes at capacity, and the ground saturated from the late thaw and recent rain, there is no storage available in the Gull River system. Trumbley said the high water levels that are being experienced in Minden and other areas along the Gull River are unavoidable.

Trumbley compared the water situation in the lakes upstream of Minden to pouring a pail of water into a coffee cup. There is more water than the lakes can hold.

"It's a bit of a juggling act," Trumbley said. "We would rather cause people an inconvenience now than risk flooding them out later. We just send as much through as is prudent."

Trumbley said that TSW officials keep an eye on the weather reports. But the forecasts aren't detailed enough to predict the effect on water levels. "They never predict the amount of rain or the intensity," he said.

Part of the reason for the unusually high water levels in Minden is the fact that 45 millimetres of rain fell over a 48 hour period about 10 days ago.

"As soon as we start to see an improvement, we'll cut the water flow back," Trumbley said.

If the weather co-operates, Trumbley said it will be the middle of this week before the level of the river starts to drop.

Keith and Judy Hardy, who live on McKnight Drive in Minden, must drive or walk through about 10 inches of water to get to their home. Keith said he spoke with Mac Ellis of the TSW in Haliburton this past Friday and he was told that stop logs have been added at a couple of dams upstream from Minden, which will cause some restriction of flow. But everything hinges on the weather. More rain will aggravate the situation.

Hardy said he thought the high water last year was bad when it encroached onto part of his circular driveway.

"I never expected to be surrounded by water," he said. "I don't think we can take much more.. All we can do is wait it out and hope and pray for sunshine."

Judy Hardy stands on one of the driveway entrances to her home. The fence, seen peeking above the water, marks the edge of the circular driveway at the front of her McKnight Drive home. Water from the Gull River has completely surrounded her property.

Riverside residents feel not enough is being done about the high water

While mother Nature is being blamed for the high water in Minden, residents along the river aren't very pleased with the explanation. With yards flooded, some houses surrounded by the rising water, roads flooded and wet basements being reported all along the Gull River in Minden, some residents are wondering if the cause cannot be traced to the management of the watershed.

"It was what I would call a normal spring," said Chris Dollo, a riverside resident who has seem much of her back yard disappear under the rising water. "The melt seemed to be slow and we thought there was little to worry about, but this is ridiculous."

Dollo, who lives on Anson Street, said the authorities don't appear to be concerned about the problems they are creating for the waterfront residents.

"The high water is eroding portions of the bank along my shoreline," said Gloria Lemieux, a neighbour of Dollo's. As she stood in her back yard discussing the problem, the outflow from her sump pump kicked in several times spewing water across her dock and back into the river.

"The last time this happened it left a green slime all over the lawn. It wasn't very pleasant I'll tell you.

Another nearby neighbour Judy Hardy, is equally upset by the conditions. Her home on McKnight drive is dry, but the water backing up from the river has inundated her circular driveway, front yard and has completly surrounded her house. She and her husband Keith must either leave the property by car or don boots to wade through the water to get to dry pavement. They park the car on the one portion of lawn that is not covered by water.

Hardy has contacted the Trent Sebern Waterway authorities on a number of occasions to complain about the situation, but has received lit-

(more on page 3)

Additional cuts made to Health Unit

by Andrew Milne

The Haliburton, Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit announced layoffs last week. Five staff members spread through all of the unit's regional offices — including Haliburton — received notices which will take effect July 1.

The staff include clerical workers and dental educators.

Medical officer of health Dr. Alex Hukowich told *The Times* last week the layoffs are due principally to provincial cuts to the agency's budget, and in part to population shifts that change the funding levels, and service realignments that mean the unit no longer has the same mandate as it had previously.

The unit's budget was cut by ten per cent last year, and an additional one per cent this year. In addition, the provincial Ministry of Environment and Energy (MOEE), which has been responsible for sewage system inspections, and which has had a contract with the unit since the 70's to carry them out, is no longer responsible for those inspections — that duty now falls to municipalities.

Hukowich said cuts for the unit have been difficult, principally for two reasons: first, the unit has never had to deal with layoffs of any significant scale previously, and second, that by virtue of the unpredictable nature of public health and public health crises, it's difficult to gauge future resource needs.

"It will have an impact on the services," said Hukowich. "What the nature of that impact will be it's hard to say. Clearly we want to maintain as many of the services we offer — and there are some things that become more crucial than others — but unfortunately some of the things that are the most crucial are those most difficult to plan. In other words if there's an outbreak of something and we have to round up resources, then we'll have to drop everything else and concentrate on that for a while. If we're fortunate and we don't have those, or we're able to avoid them by doing better things in other ways, we may be able to minimize the impact the public notices. It becomes part of the ongoing difficulty of public health that a lot of what we do is not noticeable until it's gone."

The layoffs aren't the first the unit

(more on page 2)

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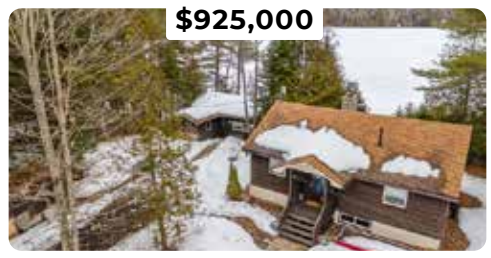

BED 3+2 | BATH 1+1 | MLS #X12954018

LONG LAKE, MINK RD
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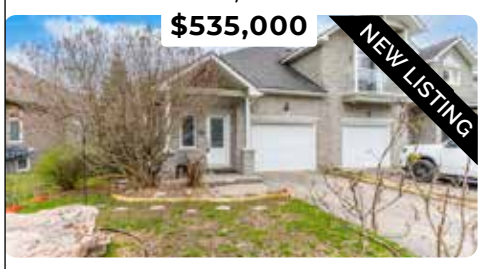
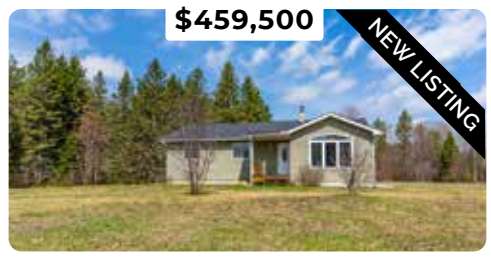


BED 2 | BATH 2 | COMING SOON TO REALTOR.CA

KUSHOG LAKE, HIGHWAY 35
$499,900

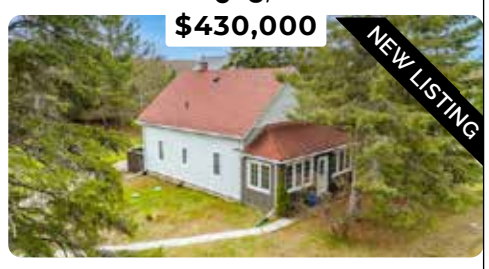
BED 4 | BATH 2 | MLS #X12604142

OUTRAM RD, WILBERFORCE
$459,500 NEW LISTING



BED 3 | BATH 2 | MLS #X13096532

COUNTY RD 503, GOODERHAM
$430,000 NEW LISTING



BED 2 | BATH 1 | COMING SOON TO REALTOR.CA

GLAMOR LAKE RD
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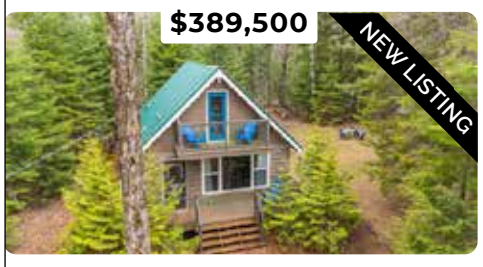

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ACRES 5.5

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ACRES 6.48

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BED 2 | BATH 2

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